

Iceland Volcano Update

1945 BST on Sunday, 16 May 2010

Latest information received from the Icelandic Meteorological Office indicates that the explosive activity from the Eyjafjallajökull volcano is continuing, with the ash plume reaching heights of up to around 25,000 ft. The Icelandic Meteorological Office state that there are no signs that the eruption is about to end, with the situation remaining dynamic.



The ash cloud has already pushed across parts of the UK, resulting in closures to UK airspace. Two dedicated atmospheric research aircraft, one from the UK and another from Germany, flew on Sunday to investigate the volcanic ash plume moving over the UK. Both aircraft found an extensive area of ash generally between 15,000ft and 20,000ft covering central and northern UK, drifting south. In many areas the cloud was clearly visible to the naked eye and was described as 'a grey-black layer'. The pilots of the DLR aircraft reported that 'one should not fly into this layer'.

The ash cloud is expected to clear the UK during Tuesday as south-westerly winds become established during Monday.

The Met Office will provide frequently updated information to NATS and CAA about the movement of the volcanic ash, in line with the standards and tolerances set by the CAA and the aviation industry.

Operational decisions on airspace restrictions are the responsibility of CAA and further information on the impacts of the volcanic ash should be sought from them. However, no decision on airspace restrictions will be made more than 24 hours in advance.

[Five day ash prediction charts](#) are now available to provide an indication of possible ash cloud dispersion beyond the short term. Until now, the Met Office has provided charts showing ash forecasts for the next 18 hours, and these remain the charts on which operational decisions are made.

Beyond 18 hours we have to deal with the unpredictability of the volcano and it is worth stressing that forecasts of winds become more uncertain the longer the lead time. Hence these forecasts are for general guidance only and you should refer to the short period charts for more accurate information.

Iceland Volcano latest observations

Related links:

[CAA](#) — UK Civil Aviation Authority

[NATS](#) — National Air Traffic Services

[Icelandic Met Office: Update on activity](#)

Notes to editors:

- The Met Office is the UK's National Weather Service, providing 24x7 world-renowned scientific excellence in weather, climate and environmental forecasts and severe weather warnings for the protection of life and property.
- As one of only two [World Area Forecast Centres](#), the Met Office regularly advises the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and National Air Traffic Services.
- Met Office forecasters monitor volcanic eruptions as part of the Met Office's role in the global network of nine Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres (VAAC).
- Volcanic ash can be dangerous for aircraft, causing damage, reducing visibility, and potentially clogging engines.
- The Met Office's Environment Monitoring and Response Centre is constantly monitoring the Iceland area. Our first advisory was issued at 1400 on 14 April and they have subsequently been updated every six hours.

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